

NEW SHOREHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Block Island School

June 16, 2008

7:00 p.m.

The New Shoreham School Committee met in open session on Monday, June 16, 2008, in the media center of the Block Island School. Chair William Padien called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The following members were present: Shea Butcher, Annie Hall, Sean McGarry, William Padien, and Richard Tretheway. Leslie Ryan and Davida Irving were also in attendance.

Approval of Minutes

A motion (Hall, Butcher) to approve the open session minutes of the meeting held on May 19, 2008, as presented carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Hall, Padien) to approve the executive session minutes of the meeting held on May 19, 2008, as presented carried with a vote of 5-0.

Reports

Nancy Cole presented the fiscal report through the end of May 31, 2008, stating there is nothing out of the ordinary that has not been discussed in the past. A motion (Padien, Butcher) to accept the May 31, 2008, fiscal report as presented carried with a vote of 5-0.

Finance Director Amy Lewis was present to answer questions the School Committee had about the Uniform Chart of Accounts (UCOA). She explained that the Fundware software program used by the town and the school has been bought and sold by software companies over the last several years. She expects more changes as this software company continues to be purchased by non-government entities. The town has been looking at software that would be able to handle the Rhode Island Department of Education required UCOA for the school and also address the needs of the town. Ms Lewis stated that those schools that already made the switch to UCOA have found it more difficult than the state anticipated. The price range for the software they have reviewed is between \$4,000 and \$7,000 and the \$9,000 the school budgeted for this purpose will go a long way to cover the purchase and training. She also reported that RIDE has put aside \$15,708 for our conversion. In answer to how having the same software would keep the school's independence from the town, Ms Lewis stated that Mrs. Cole is a "stand alone," but some redundancy is needed. If an emergency arose, someone from the town could step in if they understand the software. Ms Lewis expects that a summary with a recommendation will be presented to the School Committee for next month's meeting.

In regards to some of the concerns raised in the past week over room 20, a motion (Padien, McGarry) to hire an independent person to investigate the current use of our school building facility for usage and safety concerns carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (McGarry, Hall) to have the school's attorney interview the proposed individuals to determine their availability, training, and experience on the charge requested above carried with a vote of 5-0. Tom DiPaola, the current superintendent in Westerly and previously the Director of Special Needs at the Department of Education, has recommended several people as possibilities for the independent investigation.

A motion (Hall, Padien) that policies be developed to address the chain of command when one or more school administrators are unavailable or unable to respond to media or public requests, the dissemination of school records to law enforcement, and access to the school building during non-school hours carried with a vote of 5-0.

Dr. Irving read the Athletic Report submitted by Matthew Moran who was unavailable to attend this evening's meeting. The varsity baseball team finished its season with a 9-1 record. Kathryn Helterline was named the varsity softball team's most valuable player.

The junior high baseball team continued to improve throughout the season. The junior high softball team finished the season with a 5-2 record. Mr. Moran thanked Kirk Littlefield, John Warfel, Rob Closter, and Matt Coviello for getting the school field into shape. He also thanked Amy Doran and the Block Island School Friends for their contribution of sports drinks and pizzas for the home games. Mr.

Moran reported that most of the 2008 soccer games for the varsity and 5-9 teams are already scheduled.

Dr. Irving reported that both the kindergarten and the senior class graduations were held on Friday, June 13. She thought both ceremonies, a first for her, were spectacular.

Information, based on the NECAP test results, was received on Block Island School's performance for 2007. The high school made its adequate yearly progress, which is the highest category. The elementary/middle grades met its targets and listed as high performing. In addition, we are a Regents' Commended School. She encouraged those who would like more information to visit her in the office.

Dr. Irving reported that the Block Island School is a little behind in curriculum writing and alignment, but has until 2010 to complete the process and draw up needs assessments. She received a proposal (\$15,000) from Jeri Thompson, a curriculum expert who met with our high school staff in May, to help with the curriculum writing. Unfortunately, no money was budgeted for this project. Dr. Irving explained our predicament to Roy Seitsinger at RIDE. The office of reform will send three representatives out to work with our staff twice a month. We will cover their transportation cost and, if necessary, put them up over night. They will begin work with the K-8 teachers in January. She feels that most of the work will be done by the end of

the academic year and suggested that RIDE use the Block Island School as a model. Dr. Irving feels this is a win-win situation.

Dr. Irving reported that RIDE now requires four years of high school math for graduation. Our student population is changing and an alternative math course is needed this year for those students not following a “college bound” program. With the best interest of our students in mind, Dr. Irving requested that the School Committee consider permitting John Warfel to teach a sixth course (tech math) during the 2008-09 school year, at a cost of approximately \$15,000. Mrs. Ryan added that they tried to accommodate the students in other ways before putting forth a solution that would have a budgetary impact. Annie Hall stated that the School Committee should find the money somewhere because this is a program that the students need. In addition, she thanked Mr. Warfel for answering that need. A motion (Hall, Tretheway) to increase John Warfel by 1/5 teaching position for the 2008-09 school year only to teach a tech math course carried with a vote of 5-0.

Dr. Irving reported that she will be leaving Block Island at the end of the day on June 20 and return on August 8 because she has lost her year-round housing. However, she will be reviewing the Student Handbook, National Honor Society regulations, conferencing with representatives from RIDE on curriculum work, and reviewing and drafting some changes for several policies.

Mrs. Ryan agreed with Dr. Irving that graduation was spectacular. Both Dr. Gibbons and valedictorian Kathryn Helterline gave great speeches.

Mrs. Ryan mentioned at the last meeting that she was participating in the school support monitoring in North Kingstown. A team will visit Block Island School in October and make recommendations on what we can do to make our school better.

Mrs. Ryan reported that she has been chosen to participate in the China initiative/exchange along with five other Rhode Island superintendents in April 2009. An administrator from China will visit Block Island and South Kingstown in the fall.

Old Business

A discussion was held on the facility use fees in hopes of having something in place for the beginning of the 2008-09 school year. Sean McGarry stated that the funding of the recreation department should come from the town's budget and not the school's. He was not saying he did not support recreation, but the school can not continue to fund programs other than our own. It is not right for the students to pay for the various programs that use this building. Others felt that the selling point for this facility was as a community building and they should not be charged an additional fee to use it. If the town decides to charge for the use of Heinz field, where our soccer, baseball, and softball practices and games are held, the

school would have to charge the town for the use of the building. Town Manager Nancy Dodge stated that the Town Council would have to determine the cost of using Heinz field and there has never been any such discussion. The School Committee wanted to know how many hours the recreation department used the facility for its adult programs. Nancy Cole and Marsha Gutierrez were asked to gather information on the kWh charge for the electricity and the number of hours the facility was used after the regular school day. There are also the janitorial costs and the wear and tear of the building to consider. William Padien stated there is a formula for figuring out the kWh usage of a room for a particular time period. He asked John Warfel to help figure it out so the discussion can continue at the August meeting.

At the March 17 meeting the School Committee agreed to address the issue of additional compensation for Rob Closter at the end of the season if no assistant baseball coach was hired. An advertisement ran in the Block Island Times throughout the season and no one came forward to fill the position. The current stipend for an assistant baseball coach is \$900 for the season. A motion (Padien, Butcher) to approve the compensation of an additional \$350 to Rob Closter for fulfilling the assistant coach duties during the 2008 season with the remainder of the \$900 remaining in the budget for baseball equipment next year was later withdrawn. The Athletic Compensation Policy defines a head coach and an assistant coach. The School Committee was unclear if Mr. Closter was asking to be appointed as the assistant

coach or just wanted additional compensation because no assistant had been hired. Attorney Myers stated that if the School Committee wanted to change a policy it must appear on the agenda. The item was tabled until more information was available.

New Business

A request for the facility use fee to be waived for the use of the school gymnasium for four evenings of open basketball was received. A motion (Padien, Hall) to waive the facility use fees for the recreation department's open basketball program for May 28, June 4, 11, and 18 carried with a vote of 4-1 with Sean McGarry voting in the negative.

Correspondence was received from Rudelyn Pila requesting that she be allowed to graduate a year early (June 2009). Ms Pila met with Pat Ustick, the guidance counselor, and was told she must take and pass Algebra II and a CAD course this summer. During the 2008-09 academic year she must take English 11 and 12, PE 11 and 12, and Health 11 and 12. In addition, she will have to complete a senior project. Ms Pila's request is supported by Mrs. Ustick, Dr. Irving, and Mrs. Ryan. A motion (Tretheway, Butcher) to approve the request from Rudelyn Pila to graduate early provided all requirements have been met carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Hall, Tretheway) to accept Kathleen Mello's resignation as a teacher assistant effective June 13, 2008, with regret carried with a

vote of 5-0.

A motion (Garry, Padien) to accept Matthew Moran's resignation as Athletic Director effective June 30, 2008, carried with a vote of 5-0.

Correspondence was received from Donna Ortelli requesting a leave of absence from her position as speech/language pathologist for the 2008-09 school year. Mrs. Ryan recommended that the leave of absence be approved even though Ms Ortelli is a couple of months shy of the requisite three years. A motion (Padien, Hall) to approve Donna Ortelli's request for a one-year leave of absence with the stipulation that a one-time memorandum of agreement is received from the New Shoreham Teachers' Association waiving the three-year time frame as stated in the contract carried with a vote of 4-1 with Sean McGarry voting in the negative. It was noted that notification of intent to return from the leave must be received by January 1. In addition, this will be an unpaid leave of absence and Ms Ortelli will receive no benefits.

A motion (Padien, Hall) to consent to the reappointment of Scott Comings as an educational consultant for the 2008-09 school year at an hourly wage \$35.45 carried with a vote of 3-2 with Sean McGarry and Richard Tretheway voting in the negative.

A motion (Padien, Hall) to consent to the reappointment of Amy Couet Doran as the maintenance supervisor for the 2008-09 fiscal year with

a stipend of \$10,000 carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Hall, Butcher) to consent to the reappoint of Patricia Ustick as the guidance counselor at an hourly wage of \$58 for the 2008-09 school year was amended (Hall, Padien) to include pending the favorable outcome of a written evaluation by the school principal carried with a vote of 5-0.

The technology appointment was postponed until the July meeting.

A motion (Padien, Butcher) to approve the Block Island School Program of Studies as presented carried with a vote of 5-0.

Calendar of Events

The next regular School Committee meeting is scheduled for July 21, 2008.

Correspondence

Various pieces of correspondence were forwarded for School Committee information, including a thank you card from the kindergarten students for providing the bus for their field trip to the Peabody Museum.

Executive Session

A motion (Padien, Hall) at 9:14 p.m. to go into executive session pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws 42-46-4, 5(a)(1) for a

discussion of job performance and (2) for contract negotiations carried with a vote of 5-0. It was noted for the record that the affected person(s) have been notified.

Open Session

A motion (Padien, Butcher) at 10:00 p.m. to return to open session carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, Butcher) to seal the minutes of the executive session carried with a vote of 5-0.

It was stated that the following motion had been made during executive session: A motion (Padien, Hall) to accept the recommendation from the superintendent for the discipline of Matthew Moran with the stipulation that the scheduling and timetable for the reviewing of classroom management strategies with the superintendent and principal are made and met, and if not this item will come back to the School Committee and Teachers' Association for further disciplinary action to be taken up to and including dismissal, carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (McGarry, Butcher) to include a uniform addendum to Leslie Ryan's contract and to Davida Irving's contract authorizing the reimbursement of travel to and from work on Block Island via the traditional ferry for the months of June, July, and August 2008 carried with a vote of 5-0.

Adjournment

A motion (Padien, Hall) at 10:03 p.m. to adjourn carried with a vote of 5-0.

Marsha L. Gutierrez, Clerk

Date approved: July 21, 2008